

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7306

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMCONSUL DANANG

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USDEL JEC PARIS

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LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJ: VIETNAM CEASEFIRE WEEKLY ASSESSMENT SEPT 12 - 18, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN MR 1 DECLINED BY HALF FROM THE HIGH LEVEL OF THE TWO PREVIOUS WEEKS. OVER EIGHTY PERCENT OF MR 2'S NUMBEROUS INCIDENTS TOOK PLACE IN THE PROVINCES OF BINH DINH, KONTUM, AND PHU YEN. RVNAF REOCCUPIED POLEI KRONG VILLAGE IN KONTUM AND DEALT ENEMY FORCES SIGNIFICANT SETBACKS IN BINH DINH AND PHU YEN. INCIDENTS IN MR 3 AGAIN DECLINED. ARVN MAY HAVE DECIDED FOR THE PRESENT TO FOREGO ITS ATTEMPTS TO REOPEN ROUTE 1-A TO PHUOC LONG, BUT SEEMS DETERMINED TO PREVAIL ALONG ROUTE 23 IN PHUOC TUY. COMBAT DECLINED IN THE DELTA, WHERE ACTIVITY CONTINUED TO CENTER IN CHUONG THIEN AND DINH TUONG, ALBEIT WITH DIMINISHED INTENSITY. THE VC ARE EXERTING PRESSURE AGAINST GVN POSITIONS ABUTTING THEIR COASTAL INFILTRATION ROUTES TO CHUONG THIEN. 44TH STZ RANGERS ARE AGAIN HAVING HEAVY GOING IN ATTEMPTS TO DISLODGE NVA FROM GIAI MOUNTAIN IN CHAU DOC.

PART I. ICCS

1. THE IRANIAN ADVANCE PARTY HAS BEEN VISITING ICCS REGIONAL SITES IN ANTICIPATION THAT ITS DELEGATION WILL BEGIN DEPLOYING IMMEDIATELY AFTER ARRIVAL IN SAIGON. THE DELEGATION WILL PROBABLY ARRIVE IN TWO GROUPS: THE INITIAL WAVE NUMBERING APPROXIMATELY FIFTY, IS EXPECTED SEPT 26, AND WILL INCLUDE HEADQUARTERS STAFF AND OFFICERS FOR REGIONAL SITES; THE FINAL CONTINGENT IS EXPECTED THE FIRST WEEK OF OCTOBER AND WILL COMPLETE DEPLOYMENT TO ALL SITES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. BOTH HUNGDEL AND POLDEL ARE FIRMING UP ROTATION PLANS INVOLV-  
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ING USE CHARTERED AIRCRAFT. HUNGDEL EXPECTS TO BEGIN FORMAL ROTATION OCTOBER 10, POLDEL SOMEWHAT LATER. NEWLY APPOINTED POLISH AMBASSADOR KULAGA IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN AIGON ON SEPT 25.

PART II. PFJMT

1. THE DRV AND PRG DELEGATIONS CONTINUE TO LINK IMPLEMENTA-

TION OF ARTICLE 8(B) TO IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT AND UTILIZE FPJMT SESSIONS TO READ LONG PREPARED STATEMENTS ASSAILING THE US AND GVN FOR NOT ABIDING BY VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT. THESE DELEGATIONS DISPLAY THEIR SENSITIVITY TO USDEL PRESS RELEASES BY DELIVERING LENGTHY REBUTTALS.

2. IN CONTRAST TO THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE OTHER SIDE, THE RVN DELEGATION ON SEPT 15 TOOK AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD FULFILLING ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 8(B) BY PROVIDING TO ALL DELEGATIONS INFORMATION ON TWO PRG SOLDIERS KILLED IN ACTION WHOSE GRAVES ARE BEING MAINTAINED BY THE GVN. AT THE SEPT 20 FPJMT SESSION USDEL BRIEFED THE DELEGATIONS ON THE JCRC OFF-SHORE CASUALTY RESOLUTION OPERATION IN MR 1 AND INVITED DELEGATIONS TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO OBSERVE THE OPERATION ON SEPT 24. (THE DRV/PRG DID NOT ACCEPT A SIMILAR INVITATION IN AUGUST.)

PART III. TPJMC

1. THE PRG DELEGATION ON SEPT 4 PRESENTED THE GVN

DELEGATION WITH A LETTER REQUESTING THAT THE GVN AGREE TO DISCUSS REDUCTION AND RELOCATION OF ICCS TEAMS. THE SUBJECT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY PLACED ON THE CHIEFS OF DELEGATION AGENDA AND THE PRG PRESSED THE GVN AT BOTH THE SEPT 7 AND 11 MEETINGS TO NAME A COMPETENT AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE THE ISSUE UNDER ARTICLE 18(C) OF THE PROTOCOL. THE MEETING OF SEPT 14 DEGENERATED QUICKLY INTO A VERBALSUGFEST OF ACCUSATIONS AND RECRIMINATIONS

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AND THE SEPT 18 MEETING WAS CANCELLED AT THE REQUEST OF THE GVN IN OBSERVANCE OF LE LOI DAY.

2. AS THE PRG HAS NO BASIS IN EITHER THE AGREEMENT OR THE PROTOCOL FOR DEMANDING A CHANGE IN ICCS TEAM SITES OR OPERATIONS, THE GVN IS EXPECTED TO FIRMLY REJECT THE PRG PLOY AND SCORE THE PRG ON ITS OBSTRUCTION OF ICCS DEPLOYMENT TO POES AND ITS FAILURE TO AFFORD THE ICCS THE ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION CALLED FOR BY THE AGREEMENT, THE PROTOCOL, AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE.

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PART IV. MR 1

1. MR 1 MARKED THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE RETAKING OF QUANG TRI WITH TWO DAYS OF FESTIVITIES. ON 14 SEPT PRESIDENT THIEU, MR 1 COMMANDER LT GEN TRUONG, MINISTER OF STATE FOR LAND CLEARANCE AND HAMLET ESTABLISHMENT AND OTHER SAIGON AND MR 1 DIGNITARIES TOURED QUANG TRI - THUA THIEN RTV AND RESETTLEMENT SITES. ON 15 SEPT, THIEU PRESIDED OVER AN IMPRESSIVE MILITARY REVIEW IN HUE ORGANIZED BY LT GEN TRUONG. IN A BRIEF ADDRESS AT THE HUE CEREMONY THIEU STRUCK A HARD LINE, CONDEMNING THE COMMUNISTS FOR CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS AND CALLING FOR CONTINUED VIGILANCE AGAINST FURTHER COMMUNIST AGGRESSION. THE MANY MARTIAL SLOGANS ON BANNERS DECORATING THE REVIEWING AREA IN FRONT OF THE CITADEL UNDERLINED HIS THEME, PARTICULARLY ONE PROCLAIMING: "SOLDIER AND CIVILIAN ARE UNITED IN FIRM SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEACE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PREPUBLIC OF VIETNAM." CONGEN COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY SPIRIT OF THE OCCASION SUGGESTED THAT PEACE REMAINS TO BE ACHIEVED, THE DISCIPLINED DISPLAY OF MILITARY MIGHT SHOULD BE REASSURING TO THE CITIZENRY OF VULNERABLE HUE.

2. ACCORDING TO I CORPS HEADQUARTERS THERE WERE 81 CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS DURING THE WEEK. THIS IS A DAILY AVERAGE OF 11, A REDUCTION ALMOST BY HALF OF LAST WEEK'S DAILY AVERAGE OF 21. GVN CASUALTIES: 38 KIA AND 238 WIA. PRG/NVA LOSSES WERE 135 KIA AND FOUR RETURNEES. QUANG TRI - THUA THIEN. THE PAST WEEK SAW THE LOWEST LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN NEARLY A MONTH AND CASUALTIES WERE FEW. THERE WERE MINOR EXCHANGES OF MORTAR AND SMALL ARMS FIRE ALONG THE THACK HAN RIVER NORTH OF QUANG TRI CITY: THE FIRST ACTIVITY IN OVER A MONTH IN THE MARINE DIVISION AREA OF OPERATIONS, BUT NOT CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT. I CORPS FORWARD REMAINS CONCERNED WITH ENEMY ACTIVITY IN BASE AREA 114 (20 KMS ESE OF HUE), WHERE 130 MM ARTILLERY IS REPORTEDLY NOW IN POSITION TO BE USED AGAINST ARVN FIRE BASES DEFENDING THE OLD ANNAMITE CAPITAL AND, IF THE ENEMY SHOULD CHOOSE, AGAINST THE CITY ITSELF.

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THE COMMUNISTS ARE STILL WORKING FEVERISHLY ON ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN AREA TO THE WEST, DESPITE THE BEGINNING OF THE MONSOON THERE. TWO-WAY TRAFFIC OVER THE ROAD NET IN WEST TRI-THIEN AREA SHOWS THE HEAVIEST CONCENTRATION ON ROUTE 9 BETWEEN LAO BORDER AND KHE SANH - AVERAGING 600-900 TRUCKS AND OTHER VEHICLES PER WEEK. (TRAFFIC ON OTHER ROADS IN VC-CONTROLLED ZONE OF QUANG TRI - THUA THIEN SELDOM EXCEEDS 100 VEHICLES PER WEEK.) THE

NUMBER OF SHIPS ENTERING THE CUA VIET RIVER FOR OFFLOADING AT DONG HA CONTINUES TO RUN ABOUT 10 A WEEK, THOUGH MANY OF THESE ARE SMALL COASTAL VESSELS.

3. IN QUANG NAM MINING AND TERRORIST INCIDENTS WERE UP SHARPLY, CAUSING 81 CASUALTIES. ON SEPT 13 A CULTURAL SHOW AND DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS AT XUYEN QUANG PRIMARY SCHOOL WAS HIT WITH A CLAYMORE MINE, KILLING EIGHT CIVILIANS AND WOUNDING 24. QUANG NGAI, WITH 124 CASUALTIES, WAS SOMEWHAT QUIETER. THE PROVINCIAL POLITICAL OFFICER REPORTS THAT PROGRESS (THOUGH MODERATE) IN CLEARING THE VC FROM EAST OF QL 1 HAS ENCOURAGED SOME VILLAGERS TO RETURN TO THEIR FORMER HOMES IN THIS AREA. OTHER VILLAGERS, IN BINH SON AND MO DUC DISTRICTS PARTICULARLY, ARE RELUCTANT TO RETURN. NO RTV SITES WERE HIT THIS WEEK, BUT LAST WEEK'S STRIKES HAVE MADE SOME REFUGEES EVEN MORE WARY OF MOVING FROM RELATIVELY SECURE CAMPS. IN ACCORDANCE WITH LT GEN TRUONG'S INSTRUCTIONS, THE RF HAVE BEEN GIVEN MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR OPERATIONS EAST OF QL 1, EXCEPT FOR THE AREA AROUND SA HUYN. ARVN FORCES, EXCEPT FOR THE 4TH REGIMENT AT SA HUYNH, ARE CONCENTRATING THEIR ACTIVITIES WEST OF QL 1 IN THE WESTERN AREAS OF BINH SON, SON TINH, MODUC, AND DUC PHO DISTRICTS AND IN THE SONG VE VALLEY.

4. WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFO ON THE POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL OF THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN TEAMS FROM QUANG TRI AND PHU BAI. THE IRANIANS HAVE MADE AN INITIAL VISIT AND REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE ACCOMMODATIONS. THE GVN REGION I TPJMC CHIEF TOLD THE PROVINCIAL OFFICEDIRECTOR THAT PRESIDENT THIEU HAD COMPLIMENTED HIM ON THE EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH MORE CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE ICCS. THE POLES INFORMED POLOFF THAT THEY HAVE NO ORDERS FROM SAIGON TO WITHDRAW SUB-REGION TEAMS. THEY HAVE, HOWEVER, SUGGESTED TRANSFERRING THE PORT OF ENTRY TEAM AT CHU LAI TO DANANG, AND AWAIT SAIGON'S RESPONSE. THE CHIEF OF GVN TPJMC IN DANANG TOLD POLOFF THAT HE AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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POLES HAVE DISCUSSED THIS AND HE AGREES IT IS A BETTER USE OF MAN-POWER SINCE CHU LAI IS REALLY NOT A PORT OF ENTRY AND DANG, WHICH IS, DOES NOT HAVE A FULLY CONSTITUTED TEAM. THIS MOVE WOULD STILL LEAVE A REGULAR TEAM AT CHU LAI. POLISH COLONEL EDWARD PORADKO, SENIOR ADVISOR TO GENERAL RYBA, RECENTLY REMARKED TO THE CONSUL GENERAL THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF THE ICCS USED MOBILE TEAMS RATHER THAN DEPLOY TO SUB-REGIONS. THIS MIGHT PROVIDE PART OF THE EXCUSE FOR FUTURE WITHDRAWALS FROM SUB-REGION SITES. EMBASSY COMMENT: THIS PROPOSAL TOO, CLOSELY CORRESPONDS TO PRG TACTICS ON EMPLOYMENT: ITS DELEGATION SEVERAL MONTHS AGO MADE A SIMILAR PROPOSAL DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GVN ON DEPLOYMENT TO TPUMC SITES.

PART V. MR 2

1. THERE WERE 148 INCIDENTS REPORTED IN MR 2 DURING THE PAST WEEK, A SLIGHT DROP FROM THE 159 CARRIED DURING THE PREVIOUS REPORTING PERIOD. INCIDENTS WERE CONCENTRATED IN BINH DINH,

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KONTUM AND PHU YEN PROVINCES; THESE THREE PROVINCES ACCOUNTED FOR 84 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL, WITH 66, 35, AND 23 INCIDENTS RESPECTIVELY. RVNAF CASUALTIES DURING THE WEEK WERE REPORTED TO BE 54 KIA AND 210 WIA, AN INCREASE FROM 38 KIA AND 181 WIA IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK. REPORTED COMMUNIST KIA'S INCREASED FROM 316 TO 324. VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE 213 AIR STRIKES IN THE REGION OCCURRED IN BINH DINH AND KOMTUM, WHICH RECEIVED 136 AND 71 RESPECTIVELY.

2. THE PAST WEEK WAS ONE OF CONSIDERABLE MILITARY SUCCESS FOR THE RVNAF. IN KOMTUM, GVN FORCES FOLLOWED THE RECAPTURE OF TRUNG NGHIA (SEPT 7-8) WITH THE OCCUPATION OF POLEI KRONG, THUS SECURING THE TWO VILLAGES WHOSE SEIZURE BY THE ENEMY ON JUNE 7-8 LED TO THE LONGEST SUSTAINED BATTLE IN MR 2 SINCE THE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE. HOWEVER, THE RVNAF HAVE NOT YET ATTAINED THEIR GOAL OF PUSHING ALL ENEMY UNITS IN THE VICINITY OF KONTUM CITY BACK ACROSS THE POKO/YA KRONG BOLAH RIVER, BUT RVNAF APPEAR TO BE DETERMINED TO CLEAR OUT THE REMAINING ENEMY UNITS. WHEN THEY DO, IT IS II CORPS COMMANDING GENERAL TOAN'S INTENTION TO ESTABLISH DEFENSE BASES ALONG THE POKO/YA KRONG BOLAH TO PREVENT THE ENEMY'S RETURN.

3. RECENT ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTIVITY IN RESPONSE TO RVNAF SECURITY EFFORTS IN TAM QUAN DISTRICT, BINH DINH, WAS DEALT A HARD BLOW ON SEPT 14 WHEN COORDINATED ENEMY ATTACKS BY FIRE AND A GROUND ASSAULT RESULTED IN 95 ENEMY KILLED, WHILE THE ARVN SUFFERED 7 KIA AND 25 WIA. THIS EFFECTIVELY DEFLATED ENEMY ACTIVITY IN THE AREA FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, BUT IT IS NOW RECOVERING. ARVN IS EXPECTING THE NVA 12TH REGT TO ATTACK TAM QUAN; THE 141ST REGT OF THE NVA 2ND DIV (PREVIOUSLY IN QUANG NGAI, BUT BROUGHT TO HOAI NHON TO REPLACE THE 21ST REGT WHICH WAS DISPERSED IN JUNE) TO MOUNT ATTACKS IN HOAI NHON; AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE NVA 3RD DIV TO GO ON THE OFFENSIVE IN PHU MY.

4. THE PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE IN PHU YEN REPORTS THAT GVN  
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FORCES HAVE, OVER THE PAST WEEK, DEMONSTRATED MORE AGGRESSIVE, IMAGINATIVE AND EFFECTIVE ACTION THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME SINCE THE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE. THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE MULTI-BATTALION OPERATION WHICH TOOK PLACE FROM SEPT 4 TO 12 AGAINST THE ENEMY'S BASE AREA 236 (SEE LAST SITREP) HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS 64 ENEMY KIA AND 11 CAPTURED. FRIENDLY LOSSES WERE PUT AT 7 KIA AND 16 WIA. THIS SUCCESS HAS GIVEN PROVINCIAL FORCES AN ESPIRIT DE CORPS NOT SEEN BEFORE. IN CONSEQUENCE, THEY NOW PLAN TO INSERT THREE RANGER BATTALIONS IN THE HEART OF BASE AREA 236 IN THE NEAR FUTURE. SUCH A PLAN WOULD COMPLEMENT INTENTIONS TO THROW A STRING OF OUTPOSTS ALONG THE INSECURE AREA ADJACENT TO BASE AREA 236, AND THUS BRING THIS POTENTIALLY PRODUCTIVE AREA UNDER MORE EFFECTIVE GVN CONTROL. THE SAME STRATEGY IS BEING EMPLOYED TO SIMILAR PURPOSE IN TAM QUAN, BINH DINH, WHERE A LINE OF FRIENDLY OUTPOSTS WILL IMPROVE SECURITY FOR THE GVN'S AREA OF CONTROL WEST OF QL 1.

5. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THE RVNAF DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE DESTROYED THE ENEMY'S COMBAT CAPABILITY. IN KONTUM, ENEMY FORCES WITHDREW JUST BEFORE THE ARVN REOCCUPIED THE TWO CONTESTED TOWNS AND THUS ESCAPED THE KIND OF DESTRUCTION WHICH WOULD PUT THEM OUT OF FUTURE COMBAT. DESPITE A LOWER LEVEL OF HOSTILITY FOLLOWING THE CAPTURE OF THE TOWNS, ENEMY FORCES STILL REMAIN ACTIVE EAST OF THE POKO/YA KRONG BOLAH RIVER. IN BINH DINH, REPORTS THAT THE NVA 3RD DIV HAS BEEN REINFORCED AND IS STRONGER THAN BEFORE ARE AT LEAST PARTIALLY BORNE OUT BY THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH THE ENEMY RECOVERED FROM ITS SEPT 14 TROUNCING IN TAM QUAN AND HAS RECOMMENCED HOSTILE ACTIVITY. AT THE TIME OF THE RECENT RVNAF OPERATIONS IN PHU YEN, THE ENEMY HAD REGAINED, THROUGH LOCAL RECRUITMENT, THE STRENGTH IT ENJOYED BEFORE THE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE. ITS LATEST LOSSES TO THE RVNAF, ALTHOUGH SIGNIFICANT, HAVE NOT ELIMINATED IT AS A THREAT AND BASE AREA 236 REMAINS A DANGER AND A SOURCE OF ENEMY STRENGTH.

6. INCREASED GVN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN DARLAC PROVINCE MAY ELICIT ENEMY RETALIATION, AND BRING FIGHTING TO THIS USUALLY SOMNOLENTE PROVINCE. DURING THE PAST WEEK, GVN FORCES IN DARLAC CONDUCTED THEIR FIRST SIGNIFICANT MILITARY OPERATION SINCE MID-MAY. AN RF BATTALION SWEPT THE AREA FROM BUON HO DISTRICT TO QL-21 IN PHUOC AN DISTRICT, ROUGHLY PARALLELING THE CURRENTLY UNUSED PROVINCE ROAD TL-2C, MAKING CONTACT TWICE WITH SQUAD-SIZED

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ENEMY FORCES. IN ADDITION, TWO RANGER GROUPS HAVE ESTABLISHED BASES OF OPERATIONS FROM WHICH IT IS REPORTED THEY PLAN TO OBSERVE AND INTERDICT THE MAJOR ENEMY ROAD IN WESTERN DARLAC. THE ENEMY IS LIKELY TO BE SENSITIVE TO SUCH PROBES AS IT HAS BEEN IN

THE BU PRANG AREA OF QUANG DUC.

PART VI. MR 3

1. THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING DECLINED IN THE WEEK ENDING 0800 WEDNESDAY SEPT 19 WITH MR 3 G-2 REPORTING 90 INCIDENTS COMPARED WITH 108 THE PREVIOUS WEEK. MOST INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN HAU NGHIA (21), TAY NIH (15), BINH DUONG (13), AND LONG AN (10). GVN LOSSES FOR THE WEEK WERE 20 KILLED (TWO CIVILIANS),

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52 WOUNDED (11 CIVILIANS) AND TWO MISSING. COMMUNIST LOSSES WERE 25 KIA AND ONE CAPTURED. FOURTEEN VC/NVA RALLIED TO GVN DURING PAST WEEK, AND THIRTEEN CIVILIANS FLED FROM COMMUNIST CONTROL.

2. OPERATION TO REOPEN HIGHWAY 1-A FROM PHU GIAO TO DONG XOAI HAS BOGGED DOWN OR THE VIETNAMESE HAVE MADE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO FOREGO IT FOR TIME BEING. 18TH ARVN DIVISION HAS BEEN PULLED BACK TO ITS NORMAL AO, LEAVING THE 5TH DIVISION TO SECURE PORTION OF HIGHWAY A FEW KILOMETERS NORTH OF PHUOC VINH. MR 3 OFFICIALS ARE APPARENTLY SATISFIED THAT PHUOC LONG PROVINCE RESUPPLY PROBLEM IS SOLVED BY ROUTING TRUCKS VIA QUANG DUC PROVINCE, MR 2. PHUOC LONG PROVINCE CHIEF, HOWEVER, CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT QUANG DUC ROUTING TEMPORARY SOLUTION AT BEST AND THAT PROBLEM WILL NOT BE TOTALLY SOLVED UNTIL 1-A IS OPEN TO COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC. MR 3 CG LTG MINH IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING TRANSPORTING RICE AND OTHER ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES TO PHUOC LONG BY C-130 AIRCRAFT, LANDING AT DUC PHUOC DISTRICT.

3. IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE ENEMY PRESSURE ON ROUTE 23 FROM DAT DO TO XUYEN MOC CONTINUED. SECTOR S-2 REPORTED CONCERTED GVN EFFORT TO BREAK COMMUNIST HARASSMENT OF ROAD BY REPEATED USE OF AIR STRIKES. TOTAL 19 SORTIES ACCOUNTED FOR 16 SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS. MILITARY TRAFFIC REPORTED MOVING IN PROTECTED CONVOYS; CIVILIAN TRAFFIC NOT BEING ATTACKED.

PART VII MR 4

1. THE DELTA LAST WEEK EXPERIENCED A DECLINE IN MILITARY ACTIVITY AND CASUALTIES. MR 4 REPORTED 228 ALLEGED VC/NVA CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING AT 0600 SEPTEMBER 12 AND ENDING AT 0600 SEPTEMBER 19. CORPS HAD CLAIMED 363 CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS FOR THE PREVIOUS WEEK. LAST WEEK'S CASUALTIES-114 RVNAF KILLED, 471 WOUNDED, AND 12 MISSING, AND 341 VC/NVA DEAD AND EIGHT CAPTURED-WERE THE LOWEST SINCE EARLY JULY. THE PATTERN, IF NOT THE INTENSITY, OF DELTA COMBAT REMAINED BASICALLY

THE SAME AS IN THE TWO PREVIOUS WEEKS OF SEPTEMBER. FIGHTING  
FOCUSSED ON CHUONG THIEN AND DINH TUONG PROVINCES, AND  
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SERIOUS GROUND COMBAT OCCURRED IN KIEN GIANG AND AN XUYEN PROVINCE AND IN THE GIAI MOUNTAIN AREA OF CHAU DOC. MILITARY ACTIVITY DECLINED IN BA XUYEN AND BAC LIEU, WHILE VINH LONG AND KIEN HOA WERE QUIET. IN SA DEC, THREE VC DISGUISED AS PSDF ENTERED TAN KHANH TAY VILLAGE AND ASSASSINATED THE VILLAGE CHIEF. OVER THE PAST TEN DAYS THE GVN HAS REMOVED ABOUT 378 PEOPLE FROM VC AREAS OF TIEU CAN DISTRICT, VINH BINH, TO TAP NGAI VILLAGE IN THE SAME DISTRICT, WHERE THREE RF BATTALIONS PROVIDE SECURITY.

2. ALTHOUGH CHUONG THIEN REMAINED THE PRINCIPAL BATTLE GROUND OF THE SOUTHERN DELT, MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THAT BELEAGURED PROVINCE FELL OFF LAST WEEK. REPORTED INCIDENTS DECLINED TO 10-12 DAILY FROM THE AVERAGE OF 16 THE PREVIOUS WEEK. THE VC DID NOT MILEST THE PROVINCE CAPITAL NOR THE DISTRICT TOWNS BUT CONTINUED TO HARASS THE GVN'S NEWLY CONSTRUCTED OUTPOSTS IN NORTHERN KIEN LONG DISTRICT. IN NEIGHBORING KIEN GIANG PROVINCE, THE VC MAINTAINED THEIR PRESSURE ON KIEN BINH DISTRICT. IN SOUTHERNMOST KIEN GIANG, THE VC ACTIVITY HAS INCLUDED KIDNAPPINGS, THE ASSASSINATION OF A HAMLET CHIEF, THE HARRASSMENT OF OUTPOSTS, AND THE OVERRUNNING OF AN RF OUTPOST. THE VC HAVE BEEN HITTING HEAVILY THE GVN OUTPOSTS ALONG THE TREM TREM RIVER IN TAN BANG VILLAGE-FIGHTING WHICH IS NO DOUBT RELATED TO THE COMBAT IN ADJACENT TAN PHU VILLAGE, AN XUYEN PROVINCE. THE VC D-2 REGIMENT IS NOW OPERATING IN THIS AREA AND SOME OF

ITS ELEMENTS PROBABLY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR AN ATTACK ON TAN PHU DURING THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 15. ELEMENTS OF TWO 21ST ARVN DIVISION REGIMENTS ENTERED THE FRAY THE NEXT DAY. CASUALTIES WERE NOT REVEALED BUT WERE HEAVY. MEDEVAC HELICOPTERS WERE WAVED OFF BECAUSE OF THE INTENSE GROUND FIRE. THE AN XUYEN PROVINCE CHIEF SAID THAT THE TAN PHU FIGHTING REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT VC LAND-GRABBING ATTEMPT. (CONGEN COMMSRT: WE BELIEVE STEPPED UP VC/NVA ACTIVITY IN HIEU HE DISTRICT OF KIEN GIANG PROVINCE AND ADJACENT AREAS HAS THE DUAL PURPOSE OF (A) COVERING INCREASED ENEMY EFFORTS TO INFILTRATE MEN AND SUPPLIES FROM THE COAST INLAND TO CHUONG THIEN AND (B) BOLSTERING POTENTIAL PRG CLAIMS TO CONTROL OF CONTIGUOUS REAL ESTATE FROM THE DELTA'S WEST COAST INTO SOUTHERN CHUONG THIEN. END COMMENT)

3. DINH TUONG SECTOR REPORTED 80 INCIDENTS LAST WEEK-A SLIGHT  
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INCREASE FROM THE PREVIOUS WEEK'S 72, BUT THE INTENSITY OF MORTARINGS AND ABF DIMINISHED. ACTION CONTINUED HEAVY IN SAM GIANG, WHERE RF UNITS CONDUCTED CLEARING OPERATIONS, AND IN CAI LAY. ASSASSINATIONS AND VC PROPAGANDA INCIDENTS INCREASED, AS DID HARASSMENT OF TRAFFIC ON DINH TUONG HIGHWAYS, INCLUDING ROUTE 4 IN CAI LAY/SAM GIANG AND ROUTE 29 BETWEEN CAI LAY AND MOC HOA.

4. IN A CLOSELY HELD OPERATION, 44TH SPECIAL TACTICAL ZONE COMMANDER COLONEL HOANG DUC NINH, ON ORDERS FROM MR 4 COMMANDER MGEN NGHI, IS TRYING ONCE AGAIN TO ROOT OUT THE LONG-ENTRENCHED NVA 101-D REGIMENT FROM GIAI MOUNTAIN. MINH NOW HAS SIX RANGER BATTALIONS, ONE RF BATTALION, AND AN ARMOURED SQUADRON TO DO THE JOB. AFTER AIR STRIKES ON SEPTEMBER 4 AND 5, THE RANGERS MOVED AGAINST THE MOUNTAIN. DETAILS AND OUTCOME OF THE FIGHTING ARE NOT YET KNONW, BUT CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN HEAVY. DOCTORS AT CHAU DOC HOSPITAL TOLD AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES THAT MORE THAN A HUNDRED WOUNDED HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN BY HELICOPTER.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** Z  
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**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 20 SEP 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** willialc  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
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**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** willialc  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 SEP 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14-Sep-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <31-Oct-2001 by willialc>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PINS, MILI, VS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005